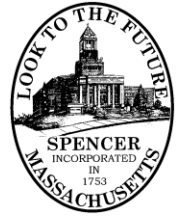


Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen



Date: Monday, November 26, 2012
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman Pepe, Vice Chair Woodbury, Clerk Stevens, Members Berthiaume & Fritze, and Town Administrator Gaudette

At 6:03 p.m. Chairman Pepe called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the Business Meeting and Executive session of November 14, 2012 (/Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

Citizen Input:

Francis Thomas, a resident of Liberty Guest House on Main St., said he attempted to cross Main St. in a motorized wheelchair when a vehicle appeared out of nowhere, and sped into the back of his wheelchair causing him to fall to the ground. The vehicle fled the scene; therefore the police are still investigating. Mr. Thomas said his cousin was with him and was injured when a part flew off of the wheelchair. Both were fortunate to have only minor injuries. Mr. Thomas asked the Board to look into signage or a blinking light to alert drivers of a crosswalk.

Mr. Pepe said he was sorry to hear about the situation and will check with the Police Chief and Highway Superintendent to see what can be done to minimize the risk.

Communications:

The Christmas Stroll will take place from 9 am to 3 pm on December 1st.

The Christmas Parade will take place at 7 pm on December 8th.

New Business:

a) Discussion: 2013 CDBG Community Development Strategy – Christopher Dunphy, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Mr. Gaudette introduced Grant Consultant Christopher Dunphy, from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

Mr. Dunphy explained that the CDBG Grant begins at the federal level with HUD, and then flows through the State level. One requirement is for the Town to discuss a Community Development Strategy (CDS) in a public meeting. Spencer previously created a “Community Development Strategy” during the 2008 grant process. This document was developed through a public process.

Objectives of the CDBG program are benefit low to moderate income persons and the removal of slum and blight. In addition, the MA DCHD requires communities to target grant resources to areas demonstrating high need. The town's current community development strategy addresses these issues. Housing rehabilitation to low to moderate income persons remains a priority and there is an ongoing effort to examine blighted properties throughout the target area. The target area is presently most of the village center, which includes Mechanic Street and the South Side neighborhood. (A map was presented)

Mr. Dunphy proposed the Town keep the current strategy fundamentally intact as it remains current. He stated that some additional emphasis could be included in the strategy that addresses assistance to small businesses. In addition, although the strategy discusses need to address blighted properties, additional language could include the need to examine other properties that may be abandoned, vacant, in tax title for possible reuses. Lastly, Mr. Dunphy suggested that the town could keep the comment period open for two weeks and at the next Board of Selectmen meeting, the board could endorse the proposed FY 2013 Community Development Strategy.

Mr. Stevens commented that by improving the economic environment, housing improvements automatically occur. He noted that grants have restrictions and are not necessarily in line with what is best to benefit the Town.

Mr. Gaudette noted that the Board of Health has come across some difficult and serious housing situations which should be a priority.

The Board agreed to take comments from the public on the CDS through December 10th. A final endorsement will be provided after that date. The next application is due on February 15, 2013.

The Board thanked Mr. Dunphy for his time.

b) Discussion on Universal Pre-K: SEBRSD – Dr. Namin, Paul Fournier, and Cynthia Ahearn

The Board agreed to table to another meeting.

c) Action Item: Approve Selectmen's Meeting Calendar for 2013

A motion to approve the Selectmen's Meeting calendar for 2013 (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

d) Discussion: Review Community Comparison Chart

Mr. Gaudette presented last year's Community Comparison Chart and noted previous discussions with the Board relative to adding and/or removing some communities based on relevance. After a brief discussion it was decided that Board members will provide any suggested changes to Mr. Gaudette at the December 10th meeting. If changes are agreed upon, research will take place and a new list will be created in January.

Old Business:

a) Action Item: Approve Contract Extension for Town Accountant

Mr. Gaudette reported that Town Accountant, Alaine Boucher, is planning to phase into retirement and reduce her work hours. He would like to amend her contract by reducing her hours from 37 per week to 8 per week and allow for a 3% hourly rate increase.

A motion to approve the Approve Contract Extension as discussed for the Town Accountant (Berthiaume / Woodbury) passed 5/0.

b) Action Item: Approve 2013 Common Victualler License Renewal for Lincoln Hill Manor

Mr. Gaudette noted that the renewal paperwork for Lincoln Hill Manor came in after the November 14th meeting for Annual License Renewals. He asked the Board to approve the renewal noting all paperwork is order.

A motion to approve the 2012 Common Victuallaer License Renewal for AWT Family, LLC, dba as Lincoln Hill Manor (Woodbury / Fritze) passed 5/0.

Town Administrator's Report:

a) FY2014 Budget Goals

Mr. Gaudette informed the Board that he will be sending budget packets to department heads. The Finance Committee will meet in February to discuss budget and capital requests. He asked Board for their guidance looking towards FY2014.

Mr. Stevens said he is hopeful the Town will see savings from the Transfer Station and would like to point to areas where residents can see an increase in services, or prevent a reduction due to the savings.

Mr. Pepe wants department heads to offer suggestions to streamline procedures and utilize a forecasting model. Mr. Gaudette noted that there is a process which includes setting goals to determine where to go, how to achieve the goals, and a review to determine accomplishments.

Mr. Stevens pointed out that a comment was made at a prior meeting indicating a goal is to avoid laying anyone off and although he values Town employees, he does not agree that should be a goal.

Mr. Woodbury wants to utilize cost savings for long term goals, for example, improving the Transfer Station, or converting the heating system at Town Hall from oil to gas.

b) FY2013 Town Administrator Goals

Mr. Gaudette reported that he met with Mr. Pepe to discuss short term goals which include:

- Regionalization – leading the way to work with other communities and being proactive
- Subcommittee Support – assist in the Financial Management Planning Committee & Economic Development Committee

- Organizational Structure and Operational Efficiencies – improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of current services
- Grant Funding Opportunities - search for relevant opportunities
- Influence Legislative Relationships – work directly with representatives on key issues

A motion to adopt Town Administrator goals as written (Woodbury / Fritze) passed 5/0.

Board Liaison Reports:

Mr. Fritze reported:

- The footings and foundation are in place for the new fire station building. A local plumber has donated his time to install an ADA compliant bathroom.
- The Siren Project is being handled by HEI Systems.
- The foundation is in place for the Radio Communications tower
- The new sander for the Highway Department was delivered

Mr. Woodbury commented that people donating their time is what makes for a great town.

Mr. Woodbury serves on the Cable Access Committee and reported that the final contract is in process.

Mr. Pepe met with the School Committee a few weeks ago and will continue to meet with them as the budget process unfolds.

Citizen Input:

Francis Thomas thanked the Board and said he respects them and trusts something will be done about his earlier request.

Mike Toomey, Ash St., informed that Board of the following:

- DCR went through the process for Howe Park and it is now part of Wells Park.
- Advised the Board that Baypath is currently advertising for projects
- Economic development and tourism - need to promote local resources
- Transfer station can become an asset on the recycling end
- Suggests checking into #319 and #604 grants
- Complimented Mr. Gaudette for moving the stormwater project forward

Mr. Gaudette said that Mary Barker Wood has a team of students available to work on stormwater projects. He is currently working with WPI students to help with aquatic resources.

Mr. Stevens suggests an article be written in the next newsletter thanking all who donate their time and/or resources.

Board Member and Staff Comments:

Mr. Pepe drafted an application for induction into the Leadership Hall and will discuss at the December 17th Workshop. He also noted that some towns are revising their Zoning Bylaws based on the recent passing of the Medial Marijuana law. The Board will discuss further on December 17th.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

_____ Chairman
_____ Vice Chairman
_____ Clerk
_____ Member
_____ Member

Referenced Documents:

Community Development Strategy Required Elements
Community Comparison Chart
Contract for Town Accountant
Town Administrator FY13 Goals